Electronic Book viewing mode is selected in such a camera in response to an operation at the operation unit **334**, the contents of an Electronic Book can be displayed by using a memory card MC. While the camera may be utilized as an Electronic Book either in the power ON state or in the power OFF state, the zoom in/out buttons, for instance, can be used as page up/down buttons by limiting its use in the power OFF state.

[**0151**] When the Electronic Book viewing mode is selected in the power OFF state, the switch control circuit **312** executes control so as to sustain the switch **313** in the open state even if the zoom in or the zoom out button at the operation unit **334** is operated. Under these conditions, too, power is supplied to the character display module **20** only when a zoom in/out button is operated to update the display at the character display module **20**. It is to be noted that the display at the character display module **20** may be automatically selected regardless of the state of the power switch **91** whenever the camera is set in the Electronic Book viewing mode and an instruction for Electronic Book contents display is issued. Such a structure, too, reduces the overall power consumption in the device.

[**0152**] It is desirable that the camera have all the display functions shown in FIGS. **19** through **25** and allow the user to select in advance a specific display setting. It is also desirable that information indicating the power OFF state be displayed as shown in FIGS. **19** and **20**, as long as the information can fit into the display space at any display setting. However, the minimum display requirements for the camera are that it must have at least one of the display functions.

[**0153**] It is to be noted that while an explanation is given above in reference to the embodiment on an example in which power to most of the circuits, excluding the clock circuit, the CPU **331** and the like, is cut off in the power OFF state, the display can be continuously held in the power OFF state by utilizing a memory-type display element constituted with a cholesteric liquid crystal or the like even if power to all the circuits in the device is cut off.

Third Embodiment

[**0154**] Next, the third embodiment achieved by adopting the present invention in a portable telephone is explained. The portable telephone in FIG. **26** includes a display device **100**B disposed at its rear surface in addition to a main display device **100**A, and both display devices adopt a two-layer structure achieved in the first embodiment having been explained in reference to FIGS. **1** through **3**. Namely, the display devices **100**A and **100**B each comprise an image display module (first display module) **10** and a character display module (second display module) **20**, as does the display device in the first embodiment. It is to be noted that only one of the display devices may adopt the two-layer structure.

[**0155**] FIG. **27** is a block diagram of the control system in the portable telephone. The display devices **100**A and **100**B, a memory **102**, an external interface (I/F) **108**, a battery **109**, a communication control unit **110**, a clock **111** and an operation unit **112** are connected to a CPU **101** constituting a control means (circuit) for controlling the overall operations of the portable telephone.

[**0156**] The operation member **112**, which includes dialing buttons of the telephone and the like, outputs an operation signal corresponding to a depressed button to the CPU **101**. The communication control unit **110**, which includes an antenna **110**A and a wireless transmission/reception circuit, enables voice communication with another telephone via a base station (not shown) in response to a command from the CPU **101**. In addition to telephone voice calls, image data of images photographed by using the camera function and the like can be transmitted/received via the communication control unit **110**. Reference numeral **105** indicates a detachable memory card, and the CPU **101** is capable of recording image data and the like into the memory card **105** and reading out image data and the like from the memory card **105**. The external interface **108** exchanges data with an external device via a cable (not shown) or a cradle (not shown) in response to a command from the CPU **101**.

[**0157**] Power is supplied constantly from the battery **109** to the CPU **101**, the clock **111**, the operation unit **112**, an operation detection circuit **101**A and a switch control circuit **101**B. When the portable telephone is not in a standby state, power is supplied to the other circuits as well via a switch **120** in addition to the CPU **101**, the clock **111**, the operation unit **112**, the operation detection circuit **101**A and the switch control circuit **101**B. In this condition, the clock **111** measures the length of time over which the operation unit **112** remains unoperated and as the measured length of time becomes equal to or greater than a predetermined specific length of time, the switch control circuit **101**B at the CPU **101** sets the switch **120** in the open state, thereby cutting off power to the other circuits.

[**0158**] In the regular operating state, various displays are provided in the display mode shown in FIG. **5** in reference to which the first embodiment has been explained via the image display module **10**. The display contents include a basic telephone operation screen and a settings screen. In addition, if the telephone has an online service mode capability, Web contents (homepage, still and dynamic images) and an e-mail operation screen may be displayed. In a portable telephone with a photographing function, still images and dynamic images photographed with the portable telephone and still images, dynamic images and character data transmitted from a communication partner, i.e., another portable telephone, can be displayed. At the image display module **10**, full-color displays can be provided and the screen can be switched or scrolled at high speed.

[**0159**] As explained earlier, when no operation is performed at the portable telephone over the predetermined length of time, the portable telephone automatically enters the standby state under the control executed by the CPU **101**. As the portable telephone shifts into the standby state, the CPU **101** functioning as the display control means switches to the display mode shown in FIG. **6** to bring up a display of preselected display contents at the character display module **20**. As explained earlier, the power consumption is minimized in the display mode in FIG. **6**. If any operation is performed in the standby state, the portable telephone automatically reverts to the display mode shown in FIG. **5**.

[**0160**] FIG. **26**(*a*) presents an example of display contents that maybe brought up in the standby state. They include a schedule input in advance in addition to a display of the date and time. While the schedule display must be updated